EVERETT AND ASSOCIATES
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS
ESTABLISHED IN 1975

POST OFFICE BOX 1085
LA JOLLA, CALIFORNIA 92038

(858) 456-2990 TELEPHONE
(760) 765-3113 FACSIMILE

15 May 2013

Mr. Richard Bagley
28967 Palos Verdes Drive E
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275-5252

Re: Report on California Gnatcatcher Presence/Absence Surveys and Directed Surveys for Thread-leaved and Orcutt's Brodiaea, Artesian Road Properties (APNs 267-145-09 through 12 and 267-146-05 and 08), San Diego County, California.

Dear Mr. Bagley,

This report presents the results of protocol and directed surveys that I recently conducted for sensitive plant and animal species on your six lots in the Artesian Road area of eastern Rancho Santa Fe in unincorporated San Diego County. The surveys were conducted within the above-referenced parcels totaling 16.23 gross acres.

CALIFORNIA GNATCATCHER SURVEYS

Below are the results of three focused presence/absence surveys that I conducted for the federally threatened Coastal California Gnatcatcher *Polioptila californica californica* on your parcels:

The California Gnatcatcher is a federal threatened species, a state species of concern, and is a "target species" of the NCCP process. This species is a non-migratory resident whose range covers the coastal plains and foothills of Southern California and northern Baja California. In San Diego County, it is widespread in coastal lowlands below about 2,000 feet elevation and typically occurs in or near Coastal Sage Scrub (CSS). The California Gnatcatcher population is seriously declining due to loss of habitat. Between 85% and 90% of this species' habitat has been lost to urban or agricultural development. It is almost extirpated from Ventura, San Bernadino, and Los Angeles counties. The U.S. population is estimated to be just under 5000 pairs. San Diego County appears to be the center of abundance within the United States for this species.

The survey site is located both north and south of Artesian Road east of Rancho Santa Fe/Fairbanks Ranch and west of the west end of El Rancho Del Norte and Rancho Bernardo (Figures 1, 2, and 4). The site is located in a sparsely developed area south of the San Dieguito River and Crosby Ranch. The approximate USGS coordinates for the site are 33°01'N, 117°10'W (Rancho Santa Fe 7.5 minute series quadrangle, see Figure 3), as determined on-site by Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver.

Site Conditions And Vegetation Communities

The northernmost parcel of the six surveyed contains medium quality Diegan CSS. Dominant plants include California sagebrush *Artemesia californica* and flat-top buckwheat, *Adenostoma fasciculatum* interspersed with non-native grasses.

The three contiguous parcels to the south, running to Artesian Road, have apparently been grazed by horses for many years, and contain a mosaic of Non-Native Grassland, Disturbed areas, and widely dispersed re-emergent individual CSS plant species.

South of Artesian Road the northernmost parcel is dominated by dense, mature Chamise Chaparral that has apparently not burned in many decades. Portions of the parcel are routinely cleared for fire prevention purposes and a small portion contains Non-Native Grassland.

The southernmost parcel was burned in the 2007 Witch Fire, and now is dominated by non-native grasses.

Methods

I surveyed the site three times in conformance with current U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) protocol guidelines. The surveys were conducted under the authority granted to me by USFWS permit # TE-788036. The surveys were conducted by slowly walking routes within the project site (See Figures 5 and 6). After stopping, listening, and observing at intervals of approximately 30 meters, recorded Coastal California Gnatcatcher vocalizations were played for 30 seconds. After the vocalizations were played, an additional two minutes were spent observing and listening before moving to the next observation site. Weather conditions and time of day were appropriate for the detection of Coastal California Gnatcatchers (Table 1).

TABLE 1
SCHEDULE OF SURVEYS AND CONDITIONS
ARTESIAN ROAD PARCELS

Date	Time (hours)	Temperature (°F)	Wind Speed (mph)	Cloud Cover (%)
4/08/13	0930-1130	62 - 66	0-3 W	40
4/16/13	0930-1130	64 - 65	3-5 NW	85
5/14/13	0830-1100	70 - 72	0	5

Results

No California Gnatcatchers were detected during the focused surveys. Only the northernmost of the six parcels surveyed appears to have a vegetation structure and density suitable for occupation by California Gnatcatchers.

DIRECTED SURVEYS FOR THREAD-LEAVED AND ORCUTT'S BRODIAEA

This report also presents the results of a directed survey that I conducted on the six parcels for the Federally Threatened and State Endangered thread-leaved brodiaea *Brodiaea*

filifolia (TLB) and the County-sensitive Orcutt's brodiaea *B. orcutti* (ORB). Thread-leaved brodiaea is known to occur near the survey site on suitable soils, and Orcutt's brodiaea is known to occur on suitable soils in the region. The brodiaea, monocots in the Lily Family, are substantially declining throughout their Southern California range. They typically grow at the edges of vernal pools and in flood plains or areas with appropriate moist (mostly clay) soils. The stalk and flower sprout from a corm, and are unlikely to be detected except during its short flowering season, typically around May and June.

The survey was conducted by slowly walking east-west strip transects through all six parcels at intervals of no more than eight meters. This allowed complete visual coverage of the survey area. The survey was conducted on 14 May 2013, after completion of the last California Gnatcatcher Survey. The survey took 3.5 hours to complete.

To ensure that the survey date was appropriate, a nearby site with known TLB populations was also monitored. At the reference site, the TLB was in full bloom at the time of the survey.

No thread-leaved or Orcutt's brodiaea were detected on the parcels surveyed. Soil types on the parcels are not conducive for brodiaea, and the presence of very dense mature vegetation or California Ground Squirrels *Spermophilus beecheyi* and Botta's Pocket Gophers *Thomomys bottae* likely precludes most of the area surveyed from being occupied by either brodiaea.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to conduct this work and prepare this report. Please contact me if you need any additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

William T. Everett
San Diego County Approved Biological Consultant
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service California Gnatcatcher
Survey Authorization Permit # TE-788036

Figure 1. Location of surveys in regional context. Thomas Bros. Map page #1168 J3.

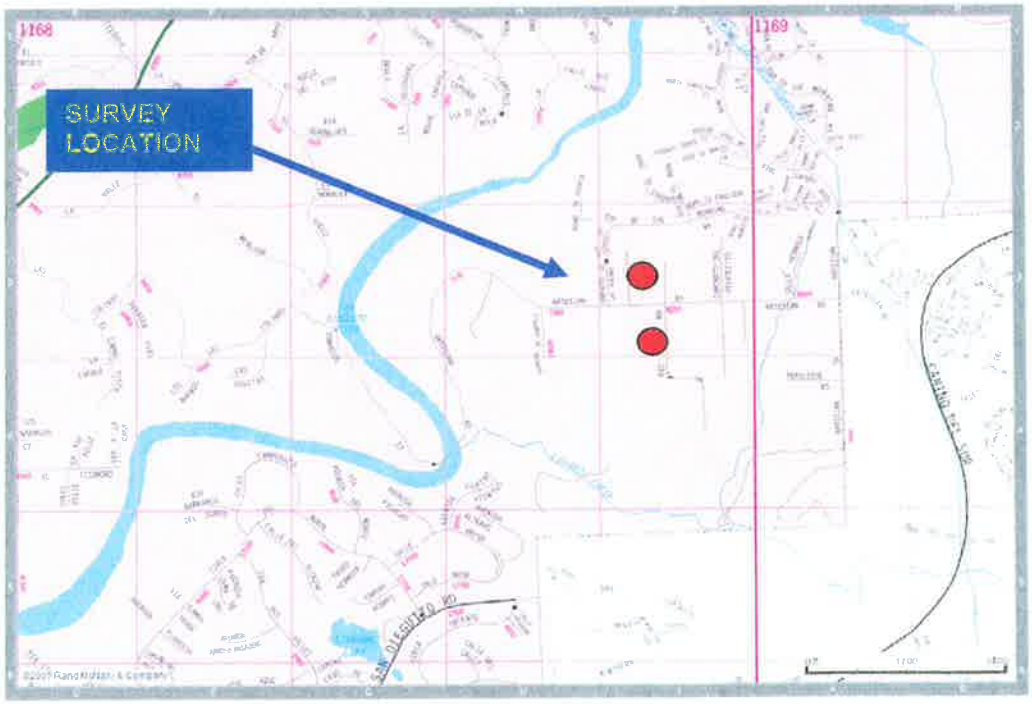

Figure 2. Detail location map of surveys. Thomas Bros. Map page #1168, J3.

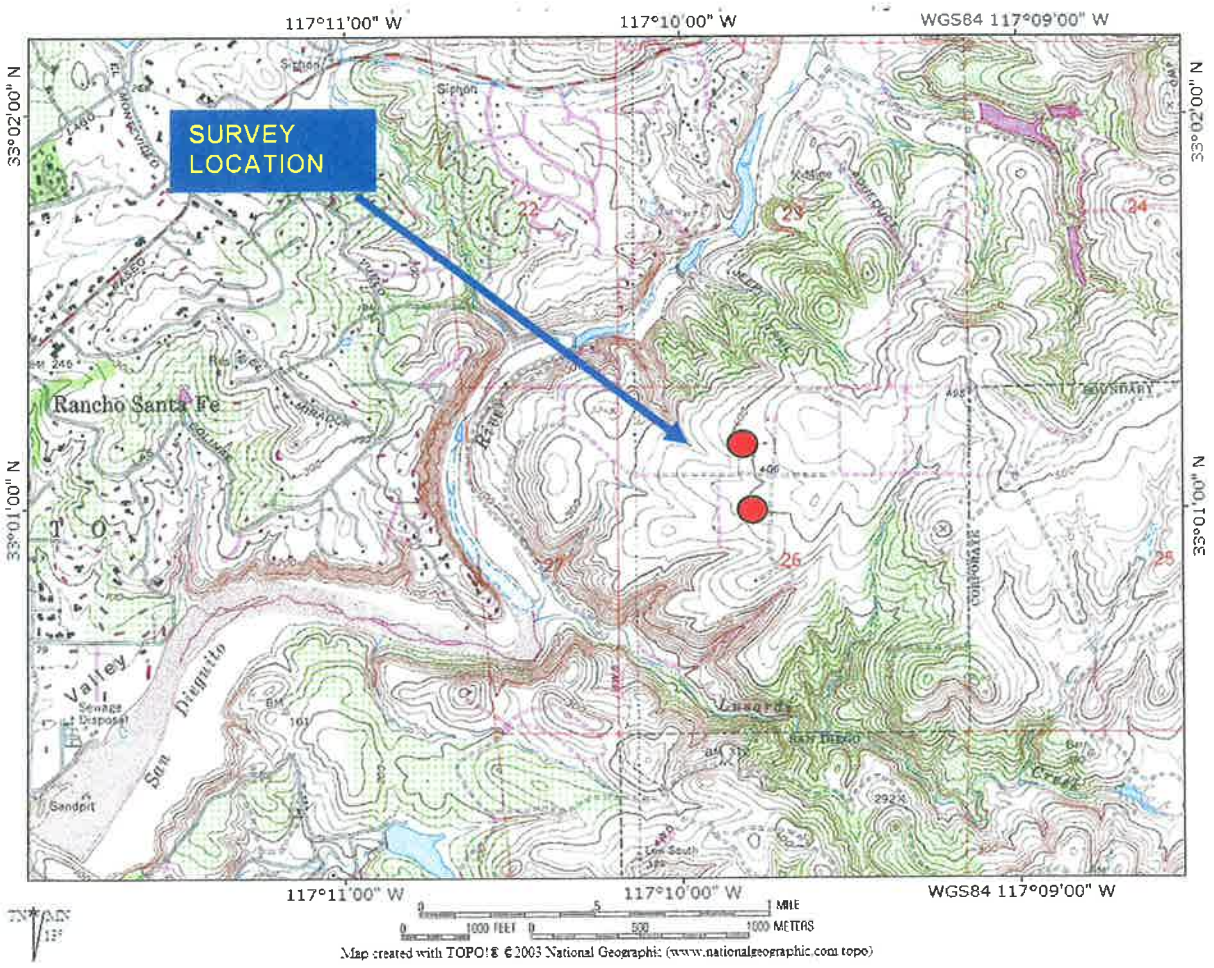

Figure 3. Topographical map showing survey location. Taken from USGS Rancho Santa Fe 7.5 minute series quadrangle.

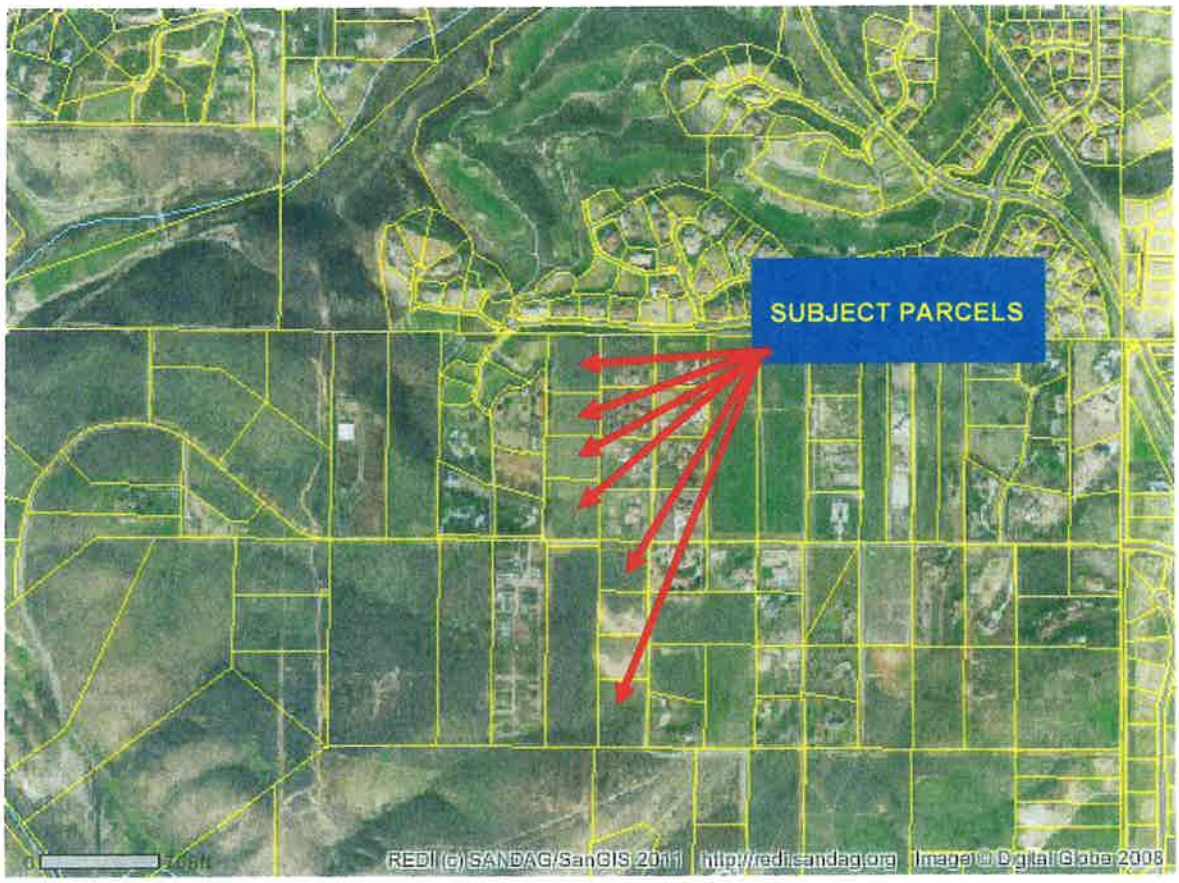

Figure 4. Close-up satellite photograph of survey locations (photograph by SANDAG/SanGIS 2008), showing parcel boundaries for the survey locations and adjacent properties. Top of photo is true north.

Figure 5. Close-up satellite photograph of survey site. Top of photo is true north. Dotted yellow line indicates route taken for gnatcatcher surveys.